[29th January 1936

Judgment of the High Court in the Cocanada Conspiracy Case.

* 540 *Q.*—Mr. Basheer Ahmed Sayeed: Will the Hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) the cost incurred by the Government for the conduct of the Cocanada Conspiracy Case till the final stage;

(*b*) what the main heads of the said expenditure are and what the amount under each head is;

(*c*) what the cost incurred is on account of the appointment of the special Judge for the said conspiracy case;

(*d*) whether the Government have perused the judgment in the same and the observations of the learned Judges of the High Court therein;

(*e*) whether a copy of the judgment will be placed on the table; and

(*f*) what action the Government propose to take in future in the light of the observations contained in the judgment?

A.—(*a*), (*b*) & (*c*) The attention of the hon. Member is invited to the answer to question No. 539.

(*d*) Yes.

(*e*) No. The judgment is a public document and the Government see no reason to place a copy of it on the table of the House.

(*f*) The observations in the judgment do not suggest any specific action on the part of the Government.

Prisons and Prisoners

Reasons for declining permission to K. Ramananda Choudari, prisoner, Madras Conspiracy Case, to sit for the Intermediate Examination of the Andhra University to be held in March 1936.

* 541 *Q.*—Mrs. A. Rukmani Lakshmipathi: Will the Hon. the Law Member be pleased to state what the reasons are for not permitting K. Ramananda Choudari, prisoner, Madras Conspiracy Case, to sit for the Intermediate Examination of the Andhra University as per G.O. Ms. No. 3248, dated 14th October 1935:—"The petitioner is informed that the Government decline to accede to his request that convict No. 1492, K. Ramananda Choudari, now confined in the Central Jail, Vellore, be permitted to sit for the Intermediate Examination of the Andhra University to be held in March 1936?"

A.—On considerations of jail discipline the permission was refused.

Mr. C. Ramalinga Reddi:—"May I ask my Hon. Friend whether this concession has not been granted to the civil disobedience prisoners in 1930 in connexion with the Andhra University examinations?"

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29th January 1936]

The Hon. Sir K. V. REDDI NAYUDU:—" I have no information, Sir."

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI:—" Will the Hon. Member call for the information, and if there is precedent, kindly extend the benefit of it to the present case?"

The Hon. Sir K. V. REDDI NAYUDU:—" Precedent alone cannot govern cases of this kind."

Control of Books and Periodicals

Alleged offending article in the 'Ananda Vikadan,' dated the 7th July 1935, wounding the religious feelings of Christians.

* 542 *Q.*—Mr. M. S. SRESHTA: With reference to his replies to question No. 165 of 8th August 1935, *re* the publication of an article in *Ananda Vikadan*, will the Hon. the Home Member be pleased to state what action, if any, has been taken by him?

A.—In view of the statement of the editor of the *Ananda Vikadan* that the intention of the article in the issue of 7th July 1935 was not to belittle the founder of Christianity, the Government considered that no action was necessary other than to issue an informal warning to the editor to be more careful in future and guard strictly against offending the religious feelings of any communities.

Mr. M. S. SRESHTA:—" May I know how this case is different from the other case in which very strong action was taken on a Christian writer of a book which was supposed to offend the susceptibilities of another community?"

The Hon. Rao Bahadur A. T. PANNIRSELVAM:—" In the other case the author was dead and could not give any explanation; in this case the author of the article says that he did not mean to give any offence and the language used is not incapable of an innocent construction, though with a little straining."

Mr. M. S. SRESHTA:—" Will the Hon. Member be pleased to place on the table of the House the statement of the editor and the informal warning given by the Government?"

The Hon. Rao Bahadur A. T. PANNIRSELVAM:—" The explanation appeared in a later issue of the same paper; the offending article was in one issue; in view of the agitation set up by Christians, three weeks later, an explanation was offered in another issue of the same paper; therefore it is open to the public as much as to the Government; as far as the warning is concerned, I can only say that we asked the Commissioner of Police to send for the editor and warn him to be more careful in future."